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PROPOSAL
FOR THE FORMATION OF A COLONY
IN
VANCOUVER'S ISLAND,
ON THE WEST COAST OF NORTH AMERICA.

(For Private Circulation.)

VANCOUVER'S ISLAND lies on the west coast of North America, between the parallels of 48° and 52° N. latitude, and is included in that part of the Oregon territory allotted to Great Britain, by the last treaty with the United States. It is about 260 miles long, averaging 50 or 60 in breadth, and contains something less than 15,000 square miles. The climate is similar to that of England, but milder, being in a lower latitude. There is less frost and snow in winter, and perhaps more rain. It is suited to English constitutions. The country is mountainous and rocky, with a great deal of forest; but the intermediate vallies are well suited to agriculture. English plants and fruits thrive admirably. The crops are fine; and cattle multiply, requiring neither provender nor protection in the winter. There is plenty of coal, and it is believed, iron and copper in the vicinity. There is abundance of water, and water power. There is plenty of game, and quantities of fish of all kinds. The geographical position of this island is peculiar, pointing it out as the future home of a great people. It has several good harbours on the west coast, and multitudes on the east coast. But there is no harbour for even the smallest vessels from the entrance of the

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straits of Juan de Fuca to San Francisco, that is, as far as from Dover to Gibraltar; hence the people who live about those straits will command a monopoly of all the trade to the west coast of North America, to the end of time. Vancouver's Island forms one side of those straits; the American territories are on the other.

It is very likely that the people who first acquire, will retain, at least for a long time, commercial superiority in the country. It cannot be too strongly impressed on Englishmen, that the political influence of their country, under the arrangements of the late treaty, will be lost for ever on the American shores of the Pacific, unless preserved by a powerful and prosperous colony in the territory we still retain.

It is proposed that a company be formed for the purpose of establishing a colony in this island.

That a grant be obtained, if possible, from her Majesty, of the whole island, to be held by charter under the crown of England, and to be governed by a specified constitution.

The present charter of the Hudson's Bay Company offers no obstacle to such a grant being made by the crown.

It is proposed that all the capital subscribed be vested in the directors in a common fund, to be expended in the outlay contingent on emigration, and the first settlement in the island; in stock, tools, machinery, &c., and food, until the colony produce enough for its own support. No interest will be paid on the capital. It is desired that no capital should be invested except by those who are going to join the colony; hence there will be no public debt.

It is proposed that the colony should include all classes. Those who must necessarily take the lead, and amongst whom

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it is anticipated the scheme will find support, are young men of the higher and middle classes in this country, who have some small capital, but not enough to enable them to live independently; who have not such prospects in any profession as shall ensure success, and who are, nevertheless, possessed of ability and enterprize, for which they can find no definite application in this country.

It is proposed to take out as large a number of labourers, farmers, and artisans, as it is possible to export upon the subscribed capital. For example—supposing *one* family could be settled in the island for £100., and the company consisted of *two hundred* gentlemen, with an average of £1000. each; then *two thousand* families could be transported to the colony.

It is proposed that, at first, no division of land or property be made; that the whole community be organized in companies, according to their different species of labor or skill; and that their united exertions be directed to clearing, cultivating, and stocking the land, building houses and mills, making roads, &c.

Some of the greatest difficulties with which settlers in a new country have to contend, arise from their isolated and unassisted position. This accounts partly for the slow progress made by new colonies. It is certain that these difficulties would be obviated, by organizing and directing the labour of the whole community.

When the land is so far cultivated as to place the colony above the possibility of starvation, it will be divided to each member, in proportion to the money he has subscribed, and the quantity and species of work he has done.

Any new settlers coming after will be subjected to a similar

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system, so that there will be means of incorporating an unlimited number into the colony.

Opposition from the natives, of any importance, need not be anticipated, as, according to the best authorities, there are not more than five thousand on the whole island. It will be the objects of the colony to conciliate and civilize them; and ultimately incorporate them unto itself as far as possible.

There is reasonable ground for expecting a considerable trade with the Sandwich Islands, and even with China.

It is desired, at present, merely to ascertain the probable number of gentlemen, of the class above referred to, who may be expected to join the company, in case the Government should be induced to look favorably on the scheme, and that, on further development, it seems entitled to confidence, and offers a reasonable promise of success.

The promoters have therefore thought it wise to issue this brief prospectus for private circulation. The details of the plan will be published presently.

Gentlemen who, under the contingencies above mentioned, are likely to engage in the scheme, are requested to communicate with the undersigned, (who will be happy to answer any enquiries) stating their names, addresses, and the probable amount of capital they will invest.

JAMES EDWARD FITZGERALD,

22, Great Castle Street,
Cavendish Square.

May 3, 1847.

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